THE COMMUNICATOR
The USAID PHN Newsletter for CAs
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The Communicator's Goals:
* To increase the flow of information between USAID's Bureau for Global Health and CAs engaged in communications and public relations work
* To enhance awareness of the need to disseminate news about our work and to show why it is important

If you would like back issues of The Communicator, e-mail lchomiak@usaid.gov

IN THIS ISSUE

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SHARPEN YOUR STORY WITH QUALITY PHOTOS

If you want to score points with the media, make certain to provide quality and timely photos with your story. As with anything else, you have to know what photos to use, which boils down to the fundamental rule of PR: know your publication. A photo should always be able to tell a story. Besides, the better your photos are, the better your chance is of having them run. Robin Weiner, staff photographer for U.S. Newswire, says that action shots are better than static, and products should always be shown being used. Every photo should be supplemented with a caption that includes the five Ws: who, what, where, when and why, including the message being conveyed. Too often, media will look at the photo first and not know what the story or message is. Then there is the timing

issue. Photo editors rarely have time to research and edit photos - they usually find out at the last minute and need images that same day. A good way to prepare for such incidents is to have your own on-line photo archive, in addition to using existing photo libraries such as AP Photo Archive (http://photoarchive.ap.org) and Newscom (http://www.newscom.com/). This allows for good-quality, available pictures that can be easily downloaded. Darrell Perry, photo editor of the Wall Street Journal, assures that providing pictures easily works to a company's advantage as it can show the company's best side with little effort.

Technique Tips:

-DO educate journalists about your online photo archive and let them choose freely what image to use;
-DO remember that supplying your own photos is a way to have some control over a story;
-DON'T use black and white photos - color is more likely to make it onto the front page of a section, and color can be easily converted into black and white (the reverse isn't true);
-DON'T neglect to update your photos at least once a year;
-DO include your company logo in a photo, but make sure to do it tastefully.

[SOURCE: PRWEEK "Providing quality photos puts your story in sharper focus" August 18, 2003]

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FIGHTING THE WAR ON SPAM: KNOW YOUR FILTERS

Jim Middlemiss, contributing editor of Wall Street & Technology magazine, complains of the exploding volume of spam. Out of 800 weekly e-mails he received in recent months, 200 were from people he knew, 80 were press releases, and the rest was spam. To minimize spam, Middlemiss started using the most rigorous e-mail filtering tool on the market: "white list," a tool which only accepts emails from a pre-approved list of senders.

He's not the only one fighting spam. Reporters are increasingly turning to e-mail filters, causing press releases and pitch letters to be caught and lost in the crossfire. In order to preserve e-mail as a viable tool for the industry, PR professionals have to gain an understanding of how to work with or circumvent these filters. While the "white list" program has slowed spam traffic, it is blocking other pertinent messages from senders not part of the pre-approved list. Specifically, small PR and other firms sending news and pitches inevitably get caught in the filter.

To avoid getting caught in spam war crossfire, consider the following:

-Aim for the "white list": keep your name off black lists by ensuring that each email you send contains valuable information to the reporter who receives it, even if your bit of news does not become a story.

-Use your experience with spam to spot key words: rely on your own familiarity with spam and avoid typing buzz words, such as "free," "the best" and "incredible," in your subject line. Also avoid using exclamation points, dollar signs and the phrase "to learn about," in the body of your message. You can double check your message content with Lyris Technologies at www.lyris.com/contentchecker.

-Update your media lists because many programs will mark you as a spammer if you repeatedly e-mail a non-working address.

-Don't send attachments: reporters hate attachments because they're a hassle and filters often deem them to be viruses. Always cut and paste your news releases into the body of an e-mail.

[SOURCE: PRWEEK "Spam filters force PR pros to refine e-mail procedures," September 22, 2003]

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RESOURCES FOR YOU

Updated USAID Logo

We have been getting a number of inquiries about the updated USAID logo and where it can be found. If you have not received or found the new logo, go to http://www.usaid.gov/images/logos/.

AdVanced Consulting

You should all know by now that we are fans of Stephanie Vance and her firm, AdVanced Consulting. Check out her website at www.advocacyguru.com and go to the Advocacy Tipsheet link, the AdVanced Consulting newsletter, to find plenty of good information, tools and resources. Two particularly useful tips are "Post Adjournment Strategies" and "Connect Your Marketing Strategies to Your Grassroots." To subscribe to regular Tipsheet updates go to http://www.advocacyguru.com/tipsheetsubscribe.htm.

[SOURCE: http://www.advocacyguru.com/tipsheet.htm#oct3]

"The Pop Reporter" Launches Customized Edition

"The Pop Reporter," the INFO Project's weekly e-zine for reproductive health care professionals, announced the launch of a new, customized edition. This new edition allows subscribers to customize their subscriptions, tailoring issues to both topic (with 17 categories) and delivery preferences (with 4 formats). Other special features include guest editorials from leading reproductive health and family planning researchers, program managers, and policy makers. To subscribe go to http://prds.infoforhealth.org/signup.php

[SOURCE: www.infoforhealth.org].

YouthNet's New Online Resources

YouthNet, a program coordinated by Family Health International (FHI), has announced two new online resources. The first is a case study of the 2002 MTV Staying Alive Campaign, the largest public health campaign ever produced, reaching over 800 million households via TV and radio stations worldwide. The case study, recently published by YouthNet, details the success and experiences of the campaign. To read more, go to http://www.fhi.org/en/Youth/YouthNet/ProgramsAreas/MediaInterventions/index.htm

The second is an updated Reproductive Health of Young Adults training module, which is designed to increase awareness and understanding of the reproductive health needs of young adults among policy makers, program directors, program planners, and health care providers. This module is available for both self-study and presentations for physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and other trained health care professionals. Visit the module and test your knowledge and skills at
http://www.fhi.org/en/Youth/YouthNet/rhtrainmat/index.htm.

[SOURCE: www.fhi.org]

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WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING

PRB: Connecting People to Useful Information

The Population Reference Bureau (PRB) has a terrific new guide that gives practical advice and examples in the art of presenting data to non-specialist audiences. The guide, called "Connecting People to Useful Information," is intended for people whose positions require interpreting and disseminating information to audiences that may not be familiar with statistics. Potential users of the guide include staff of statistical offices, research institutions, public- and private-sector population and health programs, monitoring and evaluation units, donor agencies, and universities. The guide addresses a number of

questions for developing effective presentations and includes a popular section on the most common do's and don'ts for creating text and graphic slides. Go to http://www.prb.org/pdf/ConnectingPeopleSect3.pdf for more information.

Other sections present practical techniques on how to organize and deliver effective presentations and organize a successful data dissemination seminar. The guide also contains two appendices with sample slides and reference material for preparing presentations in PowerPoint, which can be found at www.prb.org/presentations.

[SOURCE: www.prb.org]

Brand Strategies for Not-For-Profits by eCatalyst

IMPACS' monthly electronic newsletter, eCatalyst, will feature a series of articles on brand strategies for not-for-profits over the next several months. The articles will include case studies and suggestions for understanding and revising organizational identity or brands. Though many not-for-profits have ceased referring to themselves as "brands" or "potential brands," associating these terms with outmoded salesmanship lacking substance, they still must pay attention to their existing brand's identity as well as their positioning with outside audiences. To subscribe and follow these articles, go to www.impacs.org/subscribe.html.

[SOURCE: www.impacs.org/]

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YOUR FEEDBACK

With your participation, this newsletter can increase our interaction and participation in getting the word out about what we do. Let us know what you would like to see in this newsletter, what topics you want covered, or what additional items should be included. We also encourage you to become a contributor -- pass along stories about your program, including poignant accounts, major accomplishments, new publications, awards received, or upcoming conferences, to lchomiak@usaid.gov.

Also, if you know people who should get this newsletter, let us know so we can add them to our subscribers list.

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